SUMMARY

Project Description

The I-405, Tukwila to Renton Improvement Project (I-5 to SR 169 – Phase 2), referred to as the Tukwila to Renton Project, extends approximately four and one half miles along I-405, from I-5 to State Route (SR) 169, and approximately two miles along SR 167, from I-405 to SW 43rd Street. The project adds lanes; replaces and widens bridges; improves interchanges at SR 181 (West Valley Highway), SR 167, and SR 169; and adds direct access HOV ramps between I-405 and SR 167. The project includes two design options:

- The Mill Avenue design option provides access from Houser Way to Bronson Way using Mill Avenue within existing rights-of-way, and
- The Main Avenue design option reconfigures Main Avenue by widening it and striping the street for two-way traffic to provide access to Bronson Way.

These improvements, detailed in Section 2, *Project Description*, are designed to relieve congestion.

Study Approach

The I-405 Team studied land use patterns and plans and policies for the Tukwila to Renton Project because of the close relationship between land use and transportation. Land use may determine the demand for transportation facilities, and transportation projects may help determine land use. In order to evaluate this interrelationship on land use patterns we reviewed aerial photographs and current land use data overlain on a map of the project footprint. We reviewed and analyzed land use plans and regulations for the cities of Tukwila and Renton and compared them to the project to assess whether the project is consistent with them. As part of this review, the I-405 Team analyzed land use patterns, plans, and policies for two design options mentioned above. The review of each of these design options follows each major section of this discipline report.

Baseline Conditions[1]

The Tukwila to Renton Project study area consists primarily of residential, commercial, industrial, and vacant land uses. Approximately 26 percent of the property within the study area is in commercial uses; another 16 percent is in industrial uses. The study area contains two urban centers: the Tukwila Urban Center in the southwest, which includes Westfield Shoppingtown and Renton's Urban Center Downtown. Commercial and industrial uses predominate south of I-405 and west of SR 167. Residential uses make up another 26 percent of the study area and exist in three Tukwila neighborhoods and eight officially recognized Renton neighborhoods.

The comprehensive plans prepared by the cities of Tukwila and Renton identify four areas within the study area where future development will be focused. These areas are the Tukwila Urban Center, Renton's Employment Area Valley, Renton's Commercial Corridor, and Renton's Urban Center Downtown. I-405 fulfills an important transportation need in the study area as the primary regional highway for residents, businesses, and industries in Tukwila and Renton, as well as the dominant north-south corridor east of I-5.

The cities of Tukwila and Renton each have comprehensive plans that provide overall policy and planning guidance that the cities implement through development regulations such as zoning. Under the state's Growth Management Act, city comprehensive plans are required to address a wide array of issues, including long-range planning and policy direction for land use, transportation, and capital facilities. State law considers Shoreline Master Programs (SMPs) a part of local governments' comprehensive plans and development regulations. SMPs of the cities of Tukwila and Renton apply

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[1] *Baseline refers to the conditions existing after the Renton Nickel Improvement Project has been constructed but before the Tukwila to Renton Project is constructed. Conditions existing before either the Renton Nickel Improvement Project or the Tukwila to Renton Project are constructed are known as existing conditions. Since existing land uses are not expected to change dramatically, for purposes of this discipline report, existing land uses are considered equivalent to those expected for baseline conditions.*

to the Green River, Springbrook Creek, and the Cedar River within the study area.

Project Effects

Project effects on land use patterns in the area include the permanent effects of property acquisitions needed for project construction and changes to travel patterns and traffic volumes resulting from project improvements. The major effect of the project (with the Mill Avenue design option) will be 64 full acquisitions and 91 partial acquisitions, with 25 residential displacements and 16 commercial displacements to construct the project. Overall, the project will acquire approximately 81 acres for right-of-way that will be used for pavement, storm drainage facilities, or other roadway improvements. Although the proposed acquisitions are substantial to the individual property owners and tenants of properties being acquired, they represent a small fraction of the cities of Tukwila and Renton's housing and employment capacity.

Project components that we expect to change property access and vehicular traffic patterns in the area appear below:

- Removal of existing Tukwila Parkway on-ramp to northbound I-405;
- Construction of extension of Tukwila Parkway across the Green River;
- Constructing a new on-ramp from Tukwila Parkway just east of the new crossing over the Green River to northbound I-405;
- Shifting of traffic from Grady Way and Rainier Avenue S to the new split-diamond interchange at Lind Avenue and Talbot Road and the connecting frontage roads in the I-405/SR 167 interchange area;
- Closure of Houser Way vehicle crossing of the Cedar River; and
- Changes in vicinity of new on- and off-ramps to and from Renton Hill.

Temporary effects of construction include detours, partial and total roadway closures, and the location of construction activities in relation to existing land uses in the study area.

Overall, we expect the project to improve traffic flow, allowing travelers to travel through the project area more quickly, improving corridor reliability, and minimizing traffic congestion in areas such as the I-405/SR 167 interchange. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) does not expect changes in traffic flow and access to be substantial enough to change land use patterns in the study area.

The I-405 Team found that the project would not have a substantial effect on the cities of Tukwila and Renton's policies, plans, and regulations. Improvements anticipated in the project will address both jurisdictions' design, land use, transportation, and capital facilities policies. The project will support growth anticipated in both jurisdictions and indicated in their comprehensive plan and zoning maps. Capital improvement programs are consistent with the project, although the City of Renton may need to initiate a Comprehensive Plan amendment to change the functional classification of a handful of arterials within the City's Arterial Plan.

Mill Avenue Design Option

Text above describes the project effects of the Mill Avenue design option.

Main Avenue Design Option

The Main Avenue design option will result in acquisition and displacement of seven additional businesses in the eastern portion of Renton's downtown core. The downtown area can accommodate relocation of all affected businesses.

The Main Avenue design option is consistent with City land use plans, policies, and regulations. The Main Avenue design option is located in the eastern part of Renton's Urban Center Downtown designation, an area that allows mixed-use development and some of the highest densities and height allowances in the study area as an incentive for redevelopment. The City of Renton believes that the Main Avenue design option will be supportive of future redevelopment efforts in the Urban Center Downtown. Thus, this design option is in compliance with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan policies for the Urban Center Downtown. If

WSDOT chooses this design option, the City of Renton will need to add it to the City's Arterial Plan.

If the State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation designates any buildings in this area as historically important, then mitigation measures would be required to remain consistent with the City of Renton Comprehensive Plan Policy LU-63 which states in part that "Potentially adverse impacts on cultural resources deemed to be significant should be mitigated as a condition of project approval…"

Measures to Avoid or Minimize Effects

WSDOT proposes to implement a traffic management plan and use construction best management practices (BMPs) such as maintaining local access to businesses to avoid or minimize the effects of construction on land use patterns. In addition, property needed to construct the project will be acquired in accordance with federal and Washington state relocation laws.

A Renton Comprehensive Plan amendment may be required if the functional classifications of Houser Way, Mill Avenue, and Lind Avenue needs to be changed in response to how the project changes roadway structures and traffic patterns.

Some commercial parcels in both Tukwila and Renton will lose their minimum required on-site parking due to property acquisition for the Tukwila to Renton project. Tukwila and Renton have different processes for property owners to follow if they lose their minimum required on-site parking. Property owners facing this circumstance in Tukwila will need to obtain an administrative variance if the property owner seeks a building or engineering permit to rebuild or expand their business in the future. Property owners with the same circumstance in the City of Renton will require a Rebuild Approval permit to rebuild or expand.

Mill Avenue Design Option

The measures to avoid or minimize effects for the Mill Avenue design option are the same as for the project described above.

Main Avenue Design Option

Additional acquisitions necessary for the Main Avenue design option will be made in accordance with the Federal Uniform

Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended and implemented by FHWA under 49 CFR Part 24, and according to Washington state relocation laws. Similarly, the City of Renton and WSDOT will work closely on relocation of affected businesses.

If any building is determined to be historically important by the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, then mitigation must be consistent with City of Renton Comprehensive Plan policy LU-63. For more detailed information on possible mitigation measures, please see the Tukwila to Renton Project *Cultural, Historical, and Archaeological Technical Memorandum* and the *Section 4(f) Evaluation*.

Unavoidable Adverse Effects

With implementation of the mitigation measures proposed under Measures to Avoid or Minimize Effects, we anticipate that there are no substantial adverse effects.